

# “Tragic Disaster” / “Higeki-tekina saigai”

## [Japan’s March 2011 Earthquake, Tsunami and Fukushima Nuclear Meltdown]

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### PROLOGUE

*“Strength is Happiness. Strength itself is victory. In weakness and cowardice there is no happiness. When you wage a struggle, you might win or you might lose. But regardless of the short-term outcome, the very fact of your continuing to struggle is proof of your victory as a human being.”* DAISAKU IKEDA

It struck with no warning

Smashing all before its wake

Leaving an entire nation in mourning

A whole people enduring heartbreak

Magnitude 9.0 near the East Coast of Honshu

A massive force killing 15,844 people

Shattering buildings, roads, bridges and railways

An afternoon of destructive ferocity

Shifting the entire Earth 25 centimetres on its axis

A giant wave 38 metres high

Destroying hundreds of coastal towns

Surging a full 10 kilometres inland

Flooding 561 square kilometres

Along 670 kilometres of coastline

Rendering half a million people homeless

Radiation near Fukushima 1,600 times higher than safe levels

Caesium, iodine and strontium

Entering tap water, soil, vegetables, fish and beef

Threat reaching INES level of 7, the worst kind,

Melting Number One Reactor through 2,800 degrees Celsius of unimaginable heat

## EPILOGUE

*“It is when events are at their darkest that a nation finds its true light.” MICHAEL VAUGHAN*

*“Ibento wa, karera no mottomo kurai toki ni aru baai ni wa, -koku ga sono shin no hikari o mitsukeru kotodesu. ”*

POEM WRITTEN ON FRIDAY 6  
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